

Message Text

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15

ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 ISO-00 EUR-12 SY-04 CIAE-00 INR-05

NSAE-00 RSC-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 /028 W

----- 116424

P R 141600Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORIY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6701

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CFED, MA

SUBJECT: COUNTERFEIT \$100 FEDERAL RESERVE NOTES

PARIS FOR USSS

REFS: A. TANANARIVE 1707 (NOTAL)

B. PARIS 26748 (NOTAL)

1. GOMR POLICE AUTHORITIES HAVE CONSISTENTLY BEEN RELUCTANT TO PROVIDE EMBASSY INFO ON COUNTERFEIT NOTES DESPITE FACT EMBASSY INFORMED THEM OF PROSTITUTE HAVING NOTE BEFORE PRESS PICKED UP STORY ON 4 NOV. SINCE THEN THEY HAVE CONSISTENTLY DECLINED TO PASS INFO WHILE INVESTIGATION PENDING AND HAVE BROKEN APPOINTMENTS. INTERPOL REP HERE NOT WELL INFORMED ON CASE. ON 8 NOV POLICE INFORMED EMBASSY OFFICERS PURSUING OTHER MATTER THAT POLICE HAD LARGE QUANTITY OF NOTES. FINALLY, THIS A.M., EMBASSY OBTAINED INFO SET OUT BELOW.

2. ON 14 NOV JUGE D'INSTRUCTION OF MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

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SHOWED EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER STACK OF SOME 500 U.S.

\$100 BILLS. SOURCE OF BILLS STILL UNKNOWN, BUT POLICE HAVE 12 SUSPECTS IN CUSTODY INCLUDING THREE FOREIGNERS (SOUTH AFRICAN, MAURITIAN, AND BELGIAN). NO KNOWN AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT TO DATE. JUGE D'INSTRUCTION SAID HE BELIEVES 3 MILLION DOLLARS IN COUNTERFEIT U.S. NOTES IN MADAGASCAR, BUT COULD NOT PROVIDE BASIS FOR THIS HUGE ESTIMATE. ALTHOUGH SAMPLE NOTE COULD NOT BE OBTAINED AT TIME OF VISIT, EMBOFF PROMISED ONE SOON. JUGE D'INSTRUCTION VERBALLY REQUESTED THAT USG SEND IN EXPERT ON COUNTERFEIT CURRENCY, BUT NOTED THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO ASK FOR EXPERT BY LETTER. HE SAID IN RETURN FOR EXPERT'S REPORT ON CURRENCY HE WOULD TURN OVER ALL CURRENCY HE HAD.

3. EMBASSY COMMENT: IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, EMBASSY WOULD WELCOME VISIT BY SECRET SERVICE AGENT. GOMR BEHAVIOR UP UNTIL NOW WE BELIEVE PREDICATED ON THEIR RELUCTANCE TO SEEK OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE, BUT NOW, GIVEN MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEM, THEY ARE WILLING TO DO.

4. IF AGENT IS TO COME, PROVIDE US WITH PASSPORT AND TRAVEL DATA. WE WILL FOLLOW UP YOUR VISA REQUEST AT MALAGASY EMBASSY PARIS WITH MOFA HERE. SO AS NOT TO EMBARRASS JUGE D'INSTRUCTION, SUGGEST YOU NOT BE TOO SPECIFIC WITH MALAGASY EMBASSY AS TO WHO REQUESTED ASSISTANCE.

5. PRESS COVERAGE OF AGENT'S ARRIVAL IS POSSIBLE, ALTHOUGH WE WILL NOT SEEK IT. SIMPLE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF TRIP IS O.K. IF UNAVOIDABLE. (END COMMENT)
ELFERS

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